

## Gramscian Damage 1b (Revised May 5, 2017)

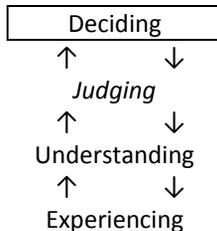
#1: *There is no truth, only competing agendas.*

Note: all that follows is not meant to be definitive but only explorative. It suggests an approach to understanding much of what is going on in the world in the context of an historical consciousness that is aware of underlying cultural influences evolving out the rationalization and/or justification of power on the part of individuals and groups over the span of human history. Such intellectual support has opportunity costs, some of which are outlined below.

Entering the reality of such a common sense group is carried out in four steps:

1. Placing the statement within Lonergan's scheme of conditioning and sublating levels of consciousness, four different "selves" of passive/active/intentional acceptance of reality, of being a detective in search of truth, of being a dispassionate judge of what is, and of being the creator of meaning in a search for a sound terminal value with which to guide individuals and societies.
2. Working out the primary elements as the position conditions higher level cognitive operations while sublating lower levels of being.
3. Giving examples of how all this is working out in society, with particular references to current events.
4. Examining the foundational position justifying the position.

Is/Is Not



**The statement** "There is no truth, only competing agendas" is a political decision to use this statement as a weapon in a class war that is intended to disarm one's opponent by reframing the search for truth as an example of social and political oppression. It is a political act in the sense that it puts something out there in the world. Furthermore, its very elimination of a higher moral authority like God means that the only source of data derives from the brain's preoccupation with scarcity, loss, and death—something that conditions human understanding, judging, and deciding. This circle of sublation/conditioning reinforcement contains no elements of the kind of cognitive dissonance the springs into being once a single moral authority is removed from the universe.

- It represents an act that demoralizes and disarms one's opponent:
  - It is designed as a means to undermine the dominate culture.
  - Anyone who stands for a moral life is in really anything but moral; he or she is using their "moral" statements to oppress and subjugate.
  - It is up to "us" to resist any effort to maintain order, to follow the mores of the culture, for to do so is to participate in an act of oppression.
  - We are on the side of the angels; you are on the side of the oppressors.
  - We are on the side of history; you are an anachronism, a throwback to earlier more conflict ridden periods that now must be set aside.
  - It redefines all social and political, cultural and ethical, events as a struggle for power; nothing exists outside these boundaries.
  - This world mediated by meaning is a closed one: there is no way to escape from within its boundaries from inside its boundaries; the only way out is through an encounter with a person or society that has a higher perspective upon which to draw.
  - There can be no greater authority than man, for anyone who stands or God is only deluding themselves in order to maintain their own dominance over others.

- Powerful groups cannot be discriminated against, for they are the very source of all oppression.
- Science is subverted for political purposes; in fact science is nothing more than another tool used by the elite to oppress others for the search for empirical truths is not possible.
- Rationality itself is set aside in favor of activist passion and intensity of feeling.
- It sublates all judgments:
  - This decision sublates judgment itself, negating the very transcendental injunction to seek the truth; in fact, sound and reasonable judgment itself is not necessary in an arena where everything is political.
  - This political act negates any possibility of rising up to the transcendental precept to be reasonable, for the search for truth can never be a search for truth.
  - Intellectual conversion cannot be a desirable goal or standard; only political activism counts.
  - Such a bias constrains any discourse or dialogue by negating any quest for what is true, replacing it with a hermeneutics of suspicion: what is that person really up to?
  - Any search for truth is replaced by the “narrative”, an historical construction that cannot have any contact with the real world for the simple reason that the real world does not exist; only narratives are real.
  - Humans themselves are completely malleable, for what it means to be human is itself a narrative, a social construct, and not in any way a “natural” species with its own innate properties and characteristics.
  - All judgments are no longer based on reason but on emotions; these emotions are derived from the common sense world and the common sense need to belong leads to the practice of value-signaling.
- It sublates understanding:
  - Whatever a person says, it is not what he or she says that is important, only the overt or covert agenda behind their words.
  - The good of order falls prey to suspicion, as trust in the reliability of others is displaced by an activism the pursues one social justice movement as another, a movement that cannot be ground in reason but only in the common sense moods swings, feelings, and delusions that often seize whole civilizations.
  - Socio/political discourse is reduced to conflict over who gets to determine what is or is not real.
  - The good of order disintegrates in an atmosphere of conflict and suspicion between individual and/or groups that leaves much of the populace vulnerable to the mechanizations of powerful people.
  - Racism is removed from any common theoretical understanding and becomes implicit in political discourse as a fundamental expressing of conflicting agenda in what is essential a contest over power, over who dominates whom.
  - Science as a separate realm of meaning becomes subordinate to political agendas, for there cannot be a scientific truth independent of the conscious or unconscious desire to control.
- It sublates experiencing:
  - One experiences a highly politicized world in which everything is reduced to the exercise of power.
  - It negates any legitimate use of authority, for any authority only hides a hidden power agenda.
  - The world is experienced as raw nature, a “tooth and claw” mentality where survival belongs to the powerful and resistance to power is the only legitimate form of action.
  - Any transcendental reality is reduced to personal/collective will, the “superman” who is unconstrained by any outside or higher power and exercises his or her own will to dominate, to control.
- It truncates or conditions the reflective level of deciding:
  - There can be no moral standards for any morality hides a hidden power/dominance agenda.

- It automates the dialectic between good and evil, for the Divine Mystery has to be reduced to impotency (after all, people who assert that the Divine Mystery is real are only deceiving themselves, hiding their true agenda of maintaining power over others).
- The only open avenue is to follow is the anti-live generative principle in the dialectic between good and evil, the “satanic” path of lies, deceit, gas lighting, and subversion of all that is good.
- This truncation ends with the creation of a hell on earth, best represented in history by the National Socialist Party’s concentration/death camps but also evidenced by the killing fields of Pol Pot in Cambodia, the purges of Mao, or the gulags of Stalin.
- The only possible terminal value is the power to dominate, an end point that reduces any and all institutions to one and one only reality—political conflict, value positioning, and exercising a “Critical Theory” that exposes the naked drive for enslaving others.
- Co-operation between free people at the level of reflective understanding is no longer possible.
- The lack of a free people eliminates the possible of challenges to the existing power structure because the decision to follow higher and better terminal values can never reach into the public sphere.
- A secular attitude must be maintained at all costs, including the elimination or isolation of Jews and Christians from the public sphere.
- Action becomes arbitrary, without any reason other than the need to exercise control and subordinate others.

**There exist opportunity costs.** Certain possibilities for development are curtailed, and an emergent Cosmopolis is one of them. The destruction of the good of order diminishes the steady stream of goods upon which any society depends, thus eliminating the middle class and spreading poverty. At this point, those seeking or holding power can exercise their “calling” by providing benefits or entitlements that in effort constrain the poor to their own poverty while providing job opportunities for their own in government, education, or administration as “overseers” of the “deplorables”, the “plebs.” Playing one group off another becomes the primary method of control, a “divide and conquer” strategy for gaining and holding power typical of a death-orientated generative principle.

**Examples:**

- The imposition of multi-gender designations including transgender invasion of what have been traditional safe places such as female bathrooms—a form of gas lighting that negates the users own moral beliefs as well as the evidence of their own eyes.
- Racism defined solely as white oppression, where there cannot exist any form of black racism for the simple reason that blacks do not hold positions of power.
- The judicial injunctions against President Trump’s suspension of immigration from a number of countries based not on law but on Trumps “anti-Muslim” statements while campaigning for president—an example of how an Trump must have a hidden agenda based on discrimination of a powerless and oppressed group who by definition must be innocent of any charges.
- The prevalence of “critical theory” rather than critical thinking in academic institutions, redefining critical thinking only as criticism of an elite power structure of white privileged oppressors.
- Closed borders can only be understood as the repression of the poor and not as for example as safe space for the emergence of a culture devoted to true values or the protection of a more humane way of living.
- Multiculturalism is the norm, with the “underclass” as protected species so although all cultures are equal to each other some cultures are more equal than others.
- What used to be thought of as catastrophic climate warming and is now categorized as climate change, itself an oxymoron since by definition the climate is always changing, becomes not a scientific endeavor to understand the world in which we live but a means to acquire power by subverting

science to political struggles involving the creation of a global government of technocrats and a political/social elite.

**It is clear that the judgment “There is no truth, only competing agendas” cannot be upheld for the simple reason that it negates itself.** The paradox that the statement is true when the statement itself holds there cannot be any truth, and yet the statement is still held as being true, means that there must be other ways of support. Since the only possible realm of meaning that could contain such a position is that of the realm of common sense understanding, all others being negated because they involve seeking what is true.

Lonergan’s patterns of common sense may provide a guide to considering a number of factors:

1. **Biological:** human beings start their lives as a species of animals, hence a number of biological needs underlie many common sense practices involving reproduction, survival (food, etc.), and the maintenance of a community. By adopting this particular position, it becomes possible for individuals and groups who would not normally occupy positions of power, authority, or influences to gain access to a wide range of resources including females. The social realities of a declining good of order are offset for them by destroying any merit system that might otherwise deny them access to biological resources.
2. **Aesthetic:** awe and mystery that once belonged to the Divine Mystery are now allocated to purely human endeavors as humans become the ultimate arbitrator of what is or is not good. The problem is that under such conditions human interests inject a purely arbitrary non-rational element in human affairs as it is the pure exercise of power rather than any attempt to govern that preoccupies their minds. So not only are moral stances to be opposed and contradicted at any opportunity, but status within this community of believes is based on adherence to a number of communal beliefs concerning the good. So value positioning becomes the accepted means of communal self-identification and signaling regardless of any truth to the matter. Any attempt to negate what is a key status indicator runs into gut-level reactions for the simple reason that the person’s very self-identify is put at risk.
3. **Dramatic:** By redefining all statements of truth as masks for a hidden agenda, all elements of society are brought into a common high drama of salvation and redemption—a saving the world mentality of rejecting oppression and supporting the oppressed. Good against evil is there underlying drama of the world, and what better where in enhance one’s position and elevate one’s emotional engagement than to reduce everything to a fight between good and evil where by one’s value positioning one is always or the side of the good. Other people may not agree, in which case subversion may be necessary to protect people from themselves. The drama itself provides a justification for seeking power, which because of its underlying transcendental level brings with it a personal challenge to go beyond one’s limited life and assume a position of importance.
4. **Intellectual:** While there is a degree of intelligence involved in the realm of common sense, it is relatively confined to the common sense of a particular time and space. This means that such a position can be supported by a group consensus regardless of any scientific, philosophical, or theological counter-arguments. It becomes true not because there is any underlying affirmable reality to the position, but because it is a commonly held belief that binds a community or a culture together. In this sense, the position itself is a counter-position that defends itself not by engaging in other realms of meaning where approximate truth (the empirical sciences) or absolute truth (theology) are asserted, but by negating these very forms of inquiry.

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